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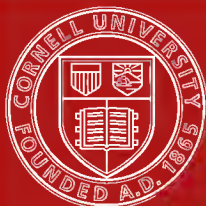
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New glimpses of Poe.



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*New Glimpses of Poe*

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**B**UST OF EDGAR ALLAN POE from the plaster model by George J. Zolnay, the bronze replica of which is now in the library of the University of Virginia at Charlottesville, Va.





# New Glimpses of Poe

BY  
*Hest*  
JAMES A. HARRISON  
*Professor in the University of Virginia*



NEW YORK AND LONDON  
M. F. MANSFIELD & COMPANY  
MDCCCCI *1881*

P.

41

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*Dedicated*  
*to*  
*The Poe Memorial Association*  
*of the*  
*University of Virginia*

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*I hold within my hand  
Grains of the golden sand—  
How few! yet how they creep  
Through my fingers to the deep  
While I weep—while I weep!  
—A Dream Within a Dream*



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## *List of Illustrations*

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- THE ZOLNAY BUST. Photo from plaster model.  
(3 plates.)
- FAC SIMILE FROM ARCHIVES OF THE UNIVERSITY.  
(2 plates.)
- THE POE MARRIAGE BOND. (1 plate.)



## PROEM

THE chapters constituting this little book originally appeared in *The Independent* for September, 1900, and are reprinted here through the courtesy of the editor. Such as they are, they are the outgrowth of a movement among the students and professors of the University of Virginia to do honor to Poe, its most famous alumnus, and remove from his memory the slanders of Griswold and others. This movement resulted, among other things, in the formation of The Poe Memorial Association, the purchase and placing of a beautiful bust of the poet, by Zolnay, in the Library of the University, and the consecration to Poe and his fellow Southern

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writers of an alcove where might be gathered as completely as possible all the works of distinguished Southrons, for study and delectation. Thus far about 200 volumes grace the shelves of this little collection, two-thirds of them contributed freely and generously by famous living Southern authors who individually and collectively expressed their pleasure in being associated with Poe in this renaissance of Southern letters.

Another outgrowth of the movement was the noble address of Hamilton Wright Mabie, Esq., literary editor of *The Outlook*, in October, 1899, on "Poe's Place in American Literature," delivered before the Association on the occasion of the unveiling of the Zolnay bust in the great Hall of the University,—an address afterwards published in fitting form in the pages of *The Atlantic Monthly*.

The three glimpses of Poe as Playmate, Student, Lecturer, as Child, Youth, and Man, sprung from the correspondence of the writer with two or three intimates and contemporaries of the poet who preserved on

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the tablets of their memories little scenes and reminiscences that seemed worthy of preservation and who have permitted him to reproduce them here in permanent form.

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## POE MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

**F**OR the benefit of those who do not know the purpose and aim of this association, the following resolutions and constitution, adopted at the founding of the association in November, 1897, are given:

“WHEREAS our most famous Alumnus, Edgar Allan Poe, has never been sufficiently honored here at the University of Virginia by public testimonials of his worth;

And whereas it has now been determined to erect to his memory a bronze bust in the new library;

And whereas it is clearly the pious duty of the University of Virginia to collect and preserve all of his literary productions, souvenirs of his life and work and material contributing to the full understanding and appreciation of his career; therefore be it

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*Resolved*, That for these and kindred purposes we here and now organize a permanent Poe Memorial Association.

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### CONSTITUTION OF THE POE MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION:

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#### ART. I.

The members of this Association shall be all those who have contributed, or shall hereafter contribute, the sum of one dollar or more to further the purposes of the Association.

#### II.

The officers of the Association shall be a President, a Vice-President, and a Secretary and Treasurer elected at the annual meeting in November, and in addition it shall be in the province of the Association to elect Honorary Vice-Presidents from non-resident members of the Association.

#### III.

The duties of the officers shall be those usually appertaining to the offices they fill, but in addition it shall be the duty of the Secretary and Treasurer to prepare and cause to be published in COLLEGE TOPICS, twice during the session, once near the beginning and once near the end of the session, a full statement of all moneys received and disbursed, together with such other information as the Executive Council may deem advisable.

#### IV.

The Executive Council, composed of the three

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## *New Glimpses of Poe*

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officers of the Association, and six members elected by the Association at its annual meeting in November, shall have full control of all plans and their execution, subject, of course, to the general judgment of the Association.

The following officers were elected: President, Dr. Charles W. Kent; Vice-President, Schuyler Poitevent; Secretary, Prof. James A. Harrison. Members of Executive Council, Gordon Wilson, E. H. H. Old, L. C. Williams, R. S. Brank.

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## CHARACTERISTICS

**E**DGAR ALLAN POE'S twin connection with New York and the University of Virginia makes any new light or new incident of local color connected with the poet interesting to his admirers in both localities. Tennyson's belief, lately expressed in his memoirs, that Poe was "the most original genius that America had produced," sets a seal upon his fame not easily to be overestimated even by indiscreet eulogists, and justifies readers of his works in rescuing from oblivion before it is too late anecdotes and adventures or eccentricities that may hitherto have escaped notice.

While engaged in collecting material for filling the Poe Alcove in the new Rotunda Library of the University of Virginia I had

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the good fortune to fall into correspondence with several gentlemen who had known Poe personally, one of them intimately. They wrote out their reminiscences of the author of the famous tales and poems, and now kindly permit their use in this paper. The fading fires of the poet's great gray eyes kindle anew in these sympathetic pages and throw out new and characteristic sparks of grotesquerie and pathos as his early escapades are recounted, and this human opal becomes charged and charged again with malignant or with beautiful fires, slyly retreating or unexpectedly shooting forth under the magnet of circumstance. These glimpses of personal acquaintances present Poe as a child, a student and a lecturer. The Hamlet nature of the man, with its unsteady purpose, its wonderfully poetic flickerings, its strange logic and its boundless inconsequence, makes him a unique psychological study truly Shakespearean in the multiplicity of its facets and angles. To voyage through the shadow-land of a nature whose good and evil, angel and demon, lie adumbrated rather

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### *New Glimpses of Poe*

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than salient, where melodies of Heaven and cries of Hell float on the never-serene air, and where the radiance of the Mediterranean may in a moment lapse into the glimmer of the rotting tarns of Trinidad, mocks the geography of the psychologist and reduces his pretty charts of the soul to a genuine *terra incognita*. These "glimpses of the moon" reveal Poe, first, as he stands before us a child in the home of his adopted father, Mr. Allan, in the good city of Richmond in the year 1825.

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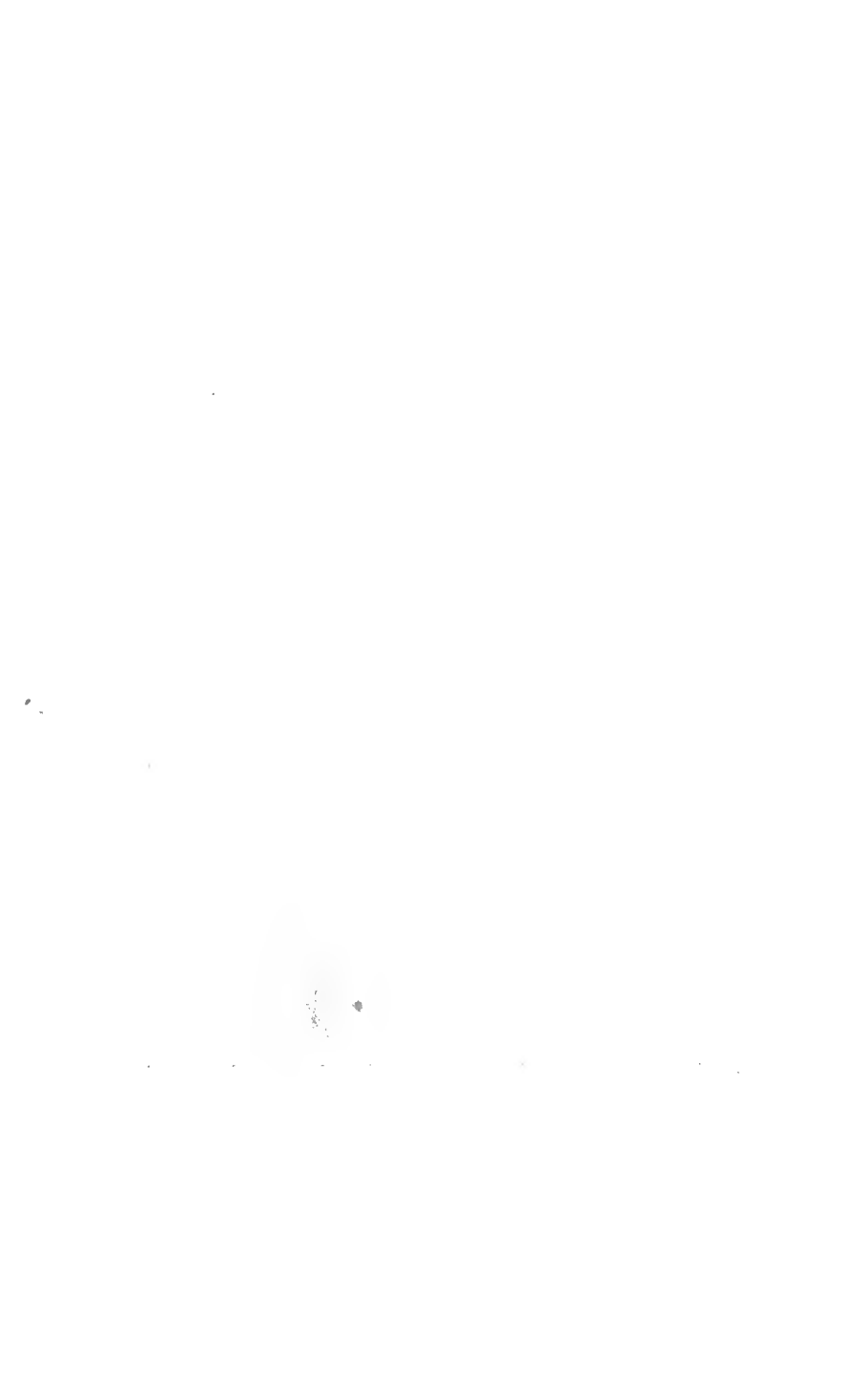
## *New Glimpses of Poe*

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¶ A brief memorandum relating to Poe, prepared by Thomas H. Ellis, formerly of Richmond, now of Washington, D. C.; a gentleman well-known to the biographers of Poe. [Col. Ellis died lately.]

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**A**UTOGRAPHIC PLATINOTYPE RE-  
PRODUCTION OF THE ZOLNAY BUST







AUTOGRAPHIC PLATINOTYPE RE-  
PRODUCTION OF THE ZOLNAY BUST





## I—POE AS A PLAYMATE

“**O**N the 8th of December, 1811, Mrs. Poe, of English birth, one of the actresses of the company then playing on the Richmond boards, died in Richmond, leaving three children. Her husband had died not long before, in Norfolk. She had made herself a favorite with those who were in the habit of attending the theater, which was then the fashionable entertainment with educated people, both in this country and England. There was general sympathy for the little orphans left by her. The eldest of the three, William Henry, was adopted by his grandfather, Mr. Poe, of

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### *New Glimpses of Poe*

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Baltimore, a gentleman of social position there, and of family pride, who had been much offended by his son's marriage with an actress. This child died young, but lived long enough to develop rare promise. The second child, born January 19, 1809, was adopted by Mr. and Mrs. John Allan, of Richmond; the youngest, a daughter, was adopted by Mr. and Mrs. William Mackenzie, also of Richmond; and the names Edgar Allan and Rose Mackenzie were given in baptism by the Rev. John Buchanan, D.D., at the residence of Mr. John Richard, who was a friend of all the parties concerned.

"The death of Mrs. Poe occurred eighteen days before the burning of the Richmond Theater, and it is not improbable that Mr. and Mrs. Allan would have been present on that occasion but for the circumstance that they were spending the Christmas holidays at Mr. Boller Cocke's, at Turkey Island, with Edgar. Mr. Allan and my father were partners in business. They had been raised together as clerks in the store of Mr. William Galt, who was the

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*New Glimpses of Poe*

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most successful merchant of his day in Virginia. The business of Ellis and Allan, beginning in 1800, so prospered that after the war of 1812-15, they determined to establish a branch house in London, for which purpose Mr. Allan went abroad and remained in England five years. He was accompanied by his wife (a cousin of my mother), by his sister-in-law, Miss Anne M. Valentine, and by his adopted son. On their return, his own house having been leased, so that he could not get possession of it, Mr. Allan and his family became members of my father's family and lived with us, I suppose, nearly a year. It was then and there that my recollections of Edgar A. Poe began.

"He was very beautiful, yet brave and manly for one so young. No boy ever had a greater influence over me than he had. He was, indeed, a leader among his playmates; but my admiration for him scarcely knew bounds. The consequence was, he led me to do many a forbidden thing, for which I was duly punished. The only whipping I

ever knew Mr. Allan to give him was for carrying me into the fields and woods beyond 'Belvidere,' adjacent to what is now Hollywood Cemetery, one Saturday, and keeping me there all day and until after dark, without anybody at home knowing where we were; and for shooting a lot of domestic fowls, belonging to the proprietor of 'Belvidere,' who was at that time, I think, Judge Bushrod Washington. He taught me to shoot, to swim, to skate, to play bandy; and I ought to mention that he once saved me from drowning—for having thrown me into the falls headlong, that I might 'strike out' for myself, he presently found it necessary to come to my help or it would have been too late! Mr. and Mrs. Allan having no children of their own, lavished upon him their whole affection; he was sent to the best schools, he was taught every accomplishment that a boy could acquire, he was trained to all the habits of the most polished society. There was not a brighter, more graceful or more attractive boy in the city than Edgar Allan Poe. Talent for

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*New Glimpses of Poe*

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declamation was one of his gifts. I well remember a public exhibition at the close of a course of instruction in elocution which he had attended, and my delight when, in the presence of a large and distinguished company he bore off the prize in competition with Channing Moore, Cary Wickham, Andrew Johnston, Nat Howard, and others who were regarded as among the most promising of the Richmond boys.

“Not content with an adopted son, Mr. and Mrs. Allan desired to adopt a daughter also, and were constantly begging for my sister, now Mrs. Beverly Tucker. The intimacy between the two families—my father’s and Mr. Allan’s—was naturally very close; on one side—I mean the side of the Ellis boys and girls—our largest Christmas gifts, birthday presents, etc., came from the Allans. Edgar was once guilty of a piece of meanness for which I have not forgiven him to this day. With our father and mother we had gone down to spend Christmas evening with the Allans. Among the toys provided for our entertainment was a snake—a

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*New Glimpses of Poe*

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long, slim, shiny thing made in sections, which were fastened to each other by wires, and a boy, by taking hold of the tail and holding it out from his body, could make it wriggle and dart about in the most lifelike manner. This hideous imitation of a serpent Edgar took in his hand, and kept poking it at my sister Jane until it almost ran her crazy.

“Of course I knew about his swim of seven miles in James River down to Warwick, accompanied by Robert G. Cabell, Robert C. Stanard, and perhaps two or three other schoolboys, with Mr. William Burke, their schoolmaster, who went along in a row-boat to rescue him in case his strength should fail. I knew also of his Thespian performances, when he and William F. Ritchie and James Greenhow and Creed Thomas and Richard Cary Ambler and other schoolmates appeared in dramatic character under a tent erected on a vacant lot one or two squares beyond what is now St. James' Church on Fifth street—admittance fee, one cent! But never was I prouder of him than when,

dressed in the uniform of the 'Junior Morgan Riflemen' (a volunteer company composed of boys, and which General Lafayette, in his memorable visit to Richmond, selected as his bodyguard), he walked up and down in front of the marquee erected on the Capitol Square, under which the old general held a grand reception in October, 1824.

"One evening there was a meeting of the Gentlemen's Whist Club at my father's house. The members and a few invited guests had assembled and were seated at whist tables set out all over the large parlor, and things were as quiet as they were on a certain "night before Christmas," of which we have read, when a ghost appeared! The ghost, no doubt, expected and intended to frighten the whole body of whist players, who were in truth stirred to a commotion. General Winfield Scott, one of the invited guests, with the resolution and promptness of an old soldier, sprang forward as if he was leading a charge in Lundy's Lane. Dr. Philip Thornton, of Rappahannock, another

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## *New Glimpses of Poe*

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guest, was, however, nearer to the door and quicker than he. Presently, the ghost, finding himself closely pressed, began to retreat, backing around the room, yet keeping his face to the foe, and as the Doctor was reaching out and trying to seize the ghost's nose with the view to twitch it off, the ghost was 'larruping' him over the shoulder with the long cane which he carried in one hand, while with the other hand he was struggling to keep from being tripped by the sheet which enveloped his body. When finally forced to surrender and the mask was taken from his face, Edgar laughed as heartily as ever a ghost did before.

"In February, 1826, Poe was entered as a student at the University of Virginia. There began that course of conduct which, step by step, led to the wretchedness of the after part of his life. Sad, inexpressibly sad, and pathetic it was, indeed."

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## *New Glimpses of Poe*

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¶ The following recollections of Mr. William Wertenbaker, appointed Librarian of the University of Virginia by Jefferson himself, were drawn up in 1869, when the aged Librarian was still living, but have never had an adequate presentation to the public. They appeared eighteen years ago in the *University Magazine* (a local publication), and have been utilized to a slight degree by Poe's biographers (among others by Mr. Woodberry in his admirable *Life*). A close inspection has revealed numerous and important errors in the Wertenbaker account of Poe's University career, the detection of which is due to the researches of Mr. S. Poitevent, a recent student of the University.

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## II—POE AS A STUDENT

“**M**R. POE was a student during the second session, which commenced February 1st and terminated December 15th, 1826. He signed the matriculation book on the 14th of February, and remained in good standing until the session closed. He was born on the 19th day of January, 1809, being a little over 17 when he matriculated. He entered the schools of Ancient and Modern Languages, attending the lectures in Latin, Greek, French, Spanish and Italian.

“I was myself a member of the last three classes, and can testify that he was tolerably regular in his attendance, and a successful student, having attained distinction at the

Final Examination in Latin and French; and this was at that time the highest honor a student could obtain. The present regulations in regard to degrees had not then been adopted. Under existing regulations he would have graduated in the two languages above named, and have been entitled to diplomas. On one occasion Professor Blaettermann\* requested his Italian class to render into English verse a portion of the lesson in Tasso, which he had assigned them for the next lecture. He did not require this of them as a regular class exercise, but recommended it as one from which he thought the students would derive benefit. At the next lecture on Italian the Professor stated from his chair that Mr. Poe was the only member of the class who had responded to his suggestion, and paid a very high compliment to his performance. As Librarian I had frequent official intercourse with Mr. Poe, but it was at or near the close of the session before I met him in the social circle.

\* First professor of Modern Languages in the University of Virginia.

After spending an evening together at a private house, he invited me in on our return to his room. It was a cold night in December, and his fire having gone pretty nearly out, by the aid of some tallow candles and the fragments of a small table which he broke up for the purpose, he soon rekindled it, and by its comfortable blaze I spent a very pleasant hour with him. On this occasion he spoke with regret of the large amount of money he had wasted and of the debts he had contracted during the session. If my memory is not at fault, he estimated his indebtedness at \$2,000, and, tho they were gaming debts, he was earnest and emphatic in the declaration that he was bound by honor to pay, at the earliest opportunity, every cent of them. He certainly was not habitually intemperate, but he may occasionally have entered into a frolic. I often saw him in the lecture room and in the library, but never in the slightest degree under the influence of intoxicating liquors. Among the professors he had the reputation of being a sober, quiet and orderly young

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*New Glimpses of Poe*

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man, and to them and the officers his deportment was uniformly that of an intelligent and polished gentleman. Altho his practice of gaming did escape detection, the hardihood, intemperance and reckless wildness imputed to him by his biographers, had he been guilty of them, must inevitably have come to the knowledge of the faculty and met with merited punishment. The records of which I was then, and am still, the custodian, attest that at no time during the session did he fall under the censure of the faculty. Mr. Poe's connection with the university was dissolved by the termination of the session on the 15th of December, 1826. He then wanted little over a month of having attained to the age of 18; the date of his birth was plainly entered in his own handwriting on the matriculation book. Were he now living his age on the 19th of this month (January, 1869) would be 60. He never returned to the university, and I think it probable that the night I visited him was the last he spent here. I draw this inference not from memory, but from the fact, that having no further

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use for his candles and table he made fuel of them

“Mr. Poe’s works are more in demand and more read than those of any other author, American or foreign, now in the library. To gratify curiosity I copy from the register a list of the books which Mr. Poe borrowed from the library while he was a student: Rollin—‘*Histoire Ancienne*,’ ‘*Histoire Romaine*;’ Robertson’s—‘*America*;’ Marshall’s—‘*Washington*;’ Voltaire’s—‘*Histoire Particulière*;’ Dufief’s—‘*Nature Displayed*.’

“UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, January, 1869.”

Mr. Poitevent’s *étude* analyzes the Wertenbaker memoir carefully, and corrects it in some important particulars. Among these are the facts that he did not sign the matriculation in his own handwriting, and there is no faculty record of his attending any classes but the Senior Latin and the Senior French, in which he is said to have “excelled” (Faculty Minutes, December 15th, 1826, Vol. II, p. 3). When summoned before the

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faculty with eight of his fellow students to testify whether or not certain university hotel-keepers had been in the habit of playing at games of chance with the students in their dormitories, Poe simply says:

“Edgar Poe never heard until now of any HOTEL KEEPERS playing cards or drinking with students.” (Faculty Minutes, Vol. II, p. 15.)

There is no record of rustication, expulsion or punishment of any kind inflicted in the official books of the university. Mr. Poitevent continues:

He was the one hundred and thirty-sixth student who matriculated. He entered February 14th, 1826; gave his name as Edgar A. Poe; date of birth, “19th of January, 1809;” parent or guardian, “John Allen,” the *e* afterward having been changed in lead pencil to *a*; place of residence, “Richmond;” professors attended, “Long” [Professor of Greek and Latin] and “Blaet-





1	Edgar Allan Poe	1809	Jan 19	Allen	Long	136
2	James M. ...	1810	Feb 1	Long	Long	137
3	John ...	1811	Mar 1	Long	Long	138
4	...	1812	Apr 1	Long	Long	139
5	...	1813	May 1	Long	Long	140
6	...	1814	Jun 1	Long	Long	141
7	...	1815	Jul 1	Long	Long	142
8	...	1816	Aug 1	Long	Long	143
9	...	1817	Sep 1	Long	Long	144
10	...	1818	Oct 1	Long	Long	145
11	...	1819	Nov 1	Long	Long	146
12	...	1820	Dec 1	Long	Long	147
13	...	1821	Jan 1	Long	Long	148
14	...	1822	Feb 1	Long	Long	149
15	...	1823	Mar 1	Long	Long	150
16	...	1824	Apr 1	Long	Long	151
17	...	1825	May 1	Long	Long	152
18	...	1826	Jun 1	Long	Long	153
19	...	1827	Jul 1	Long	Long	154
20	...	1828	Aug 1	Long	Long	155
21	...	1829	Sep 1	Long	Long	156
22	...	1830	Oct 1	Long	Long	157
23	...	1831	Nov 1	Long	Long	158
24	...	1832	Dec 1	Long	Long	159
25	...	1833	Jan 1	Long	Long	160
26	...	1834	Feb 1	Long	Long	161
27	...	1835	Mar 1	Long	Long	162
28	...	1836	Apr 1	Long	Long	163
29	...	1837	May 1	Long	Long	164
30	...	1838	Jun 1	Long	Long	165
31	...	1839	Jul 1	Long	Long	166
32	...	1840	Aug 1	Long	Long	167
33	...	1841	Sep 1	Long	Long	168
34	...	1842	Oct 1	Long	Long	169
35	...	1843	Nov 1	Long	Long	170
36	...	1844	Dec 1	Long	Long	171
37	...	1845	Jan 1	Long	Long	172
38	...	1846	Feb 1	Long	Long	173
39	...	1847	Mar 1	Long	Long	174
40	...	1848	Apr 1	Long	Long	175
41	...	1849	May 1	Long	Long	176
42	...	1850	Jun 1	Long	Long	177
43	...	1851	Jul 1	Long	Long	178
44	...	1852	Aug 1	Long	Long	179
45	...	1853	Sep 1	Long	Long	180
46	...	1854	Oct 1	Long	Long	181
47	...	1855	Nov 1	Long	Long	182
48	...	1856	Dec 1	Long	Long	183
49	...	1857	Jan 1	Long	Long	184
50	...	1858	Feb 1	Long	Long	185
51	...	1859	Mar 1	Long	Long	186
52	...	1860	Apr 1	Long	Long	187
53	...	1861	May 1	Long	Long	188
54	...	1862	Jun 1	Long	Long	189
55	...	1863	Jul 1	Long	Long	190
56	...	1864	Aug 1	Long	Long	191
57	...	1865	Sep 1	Long	Long	192
58	...	1866	Oct 1	Long	Long	193
59	...	1867	Nov 1	Long	Long	194
60	...	1868	Dec 1	Long	Long	195
61	...	1869	Jan 1	Long	Long	196
62	...	1870	Feb 1	Long	Long	197
63	...	1871	Mar 1	Long	Long	198
64	...	1872	Apr 1	Long	Long	199
65	...	1873	May 1	Long	Long	200
66	...	1874	Jun 1	Long	Long	201
67	...	1875	Jul 1	Long	Long	202
68	...	1876	Aug 1	Long	Long	203
69	...	1877	Sep 1	Long	Long	204
70	...	1878	Oct 1	Long	Long	205
71	...	1879	Nov 1	Long	Long	206
72	...	1880	Dec 1	Long	Long	207
73	...	1881	Jan 1	Long	Long	208
74	...	1882	Feb 1	Long	Long	209
75	...	1883	Mar 1	Long	Long	210
76	...	1884	Apr 1	Long	Long	211
77	...	1885	May 1	Long	Long	212
78	...	1886	Jun 1	Long	Long	213
79	...	1887	Jul 1	Long	Long	214
80	...	1888	Aug 1	Long	Long	215
81	...	1889	Sep 1	Long	Long	216
82	...	1890	Oct 1	Long	Long	217
83	...	1891	Nov 1	Long	Long	218
84	...	1892	Dec 1	Long	Long	219
85	...	1893	Jan 1	Long	Long	220
86	...	1894	Feb 1	Long	Long	221
87	...	1895	Mar 1	Long	Long	222
88	...	1896	Apr 1	Long	Long	223
89	...	1897	May 1	Long	Long	224
90	...	1898	Jun 1	Long	Long	225
91	...	1899	Jul 1	Long	Long	226
92	...	1900	Aug 1	Long	Long	227
93	...	1901	Sep 1	Long	Long	228
94	...	1902	Oct 1	Long	Long	229
95	...	1903	Nov 1	Long	Long	230
96	...	1904	Dec 1	Long	Long	231
97	...	1905	Jan 1	Long	Long	232
98	...	1906	Feb 1	Long	Long	233
99	...	1907	Mar 1	Long	Long	234
100	...	1908	Apr 1	Long	Long	235

**F**ACSIMILE OF THE PAGE OF THE MATRICULATION BOOK OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA FOR 1826, in which Edgar Allan Poe's name is entered, apparently in his own handwriting, left-hand column. He was the 136th student entered out of 177 for that session. Column record gives his birth as "19 Jan., 1809;" column third, his parent or guardian here spelt Allen; column fourth, place of residence; column fifth, the "schools" attended—those of Prof. George Long, the famous Roman historian, translator, and geographer, who was.

The Faculty met. December 20<sup>th</sup> 1826

Present John Thomas Chairman

D<sup>r</sup>. Jamieson

D<sup>r</sup>. Blakemore

W. Bonycastle

" Tucker

" Key.

The Chairman presented to the Faculty a letter from the Rector giving information that certain Hotel Keepers during the last Session had been in the habit of playing at games of chance with the Students in their Dormitories; he also gave the names of the following persons who he had been informed had some partakings of the fire or Roger Mason, Turner Dixon William Lawless, E. La Branche, Edgar Poe Edmund C. Hammond Emanuel Miller, Hugh Meadows & S. Crump who having been summoned in a year or so ago

Ed Crump was in the habit of keeping a table with Students. had a table game in his room names mentioned. Not true or Chapman was in the habit of the Board Mason being of Hotel keepers & students -

E. J. Stokes has heard of one Hotel Keeper playing at cards with Students - never heard of any other or Chapman - has seen two Hotel keepers drinking in Dormitories with Students on Saturday by no party at card of games or games in Dormitories. Hotel keepers drinking contained but a little while in Dormitory - (unproving by called on -

Richard Poe never heard much more of any Hotel keepers playing cards or drinking with Students -

Edmund Dixon never heard of any Hotel keepers playing with Students at cards or games before last Session last Session saw the church a Hotel keeper drinking and drinking with Students -

Edgar Poe has heard that students have played with Hotel

EXTRACT FROM THE FACULTY MINUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA FOR DECEMBER 20TH, 1826, just before Poe left, recording a meeting of the Faculty and an investigation into the charge that the University hotel keepers were in the habit of gambling and drinking with students, with Edgar Poe's statement denying any knowledge of the alleged practices.



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*New Glimpses of Poe*

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termann " [Professor of French, German, Italian, Spanish, Anglo-Saxon]. Under the head of "Remarks" there is a blank opposite his name. The custom then prevailing was for the Proctor to write under this head the final disposition of each student; thus if one withdrew or was suspended, or was expelled before the end of the session, the fact was duly registered; otherwise the blank remained. And, therefore, the conclusion may be drawn that he was neither expelled, as Dr. Griswold asserts, nor suspended, according to Mr. Lowell. Hence from the Proctor's point of view, his record is clean of all college dishonor.

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## *New Glimpses of Poe*

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¶ A note from the eminent Grecian, Prof. B. L. Gildersleeve, Editor of *The American Journal of Philology* and Professor of Greek in the Johns Hopkins University, thus describes Poe as he appeared in the year 1849, before a Richmond audience, reciting "The Raven":

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### III—POE AS A LECTURER

OUR concluding glimpse of this strange life-drama, which began the same year as Tennyson's, Darwin's, Gladstone's, Abraham Lincoln's, Chopin's and Mendelssohn's,—an *annus mirabilis* of poetry, music, wit, oratory and science,—is of Poe as a lecturer after he had attained celebrity as a writer. But, meanwhile, when we contemplate Gladstone's and Tennyson's long lives, a keen regret may well flash through the mind for an exquisite gift cut off so untimely, which might have flowered into marvelous exuberance; for at forty Tennyson was not yet laureate and Poe—was dead.

Poe's personality is as vivid to me as if I

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*New Glimpses of Poe*

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had heard and seen him yesterday. I am old enough to remember what an excitement his "Gold Bug" created in Charleston when it first appeared, and how severely we boys criticised the inaccuracies in the description of Sullivan's Island. Poe himself I saw and heard in Richmond during the last summer of his life. He was lodging at some poor place in Broad street, if I am not mistaken. At least I saw him repeatedly in that thoroughfare—a poetical figure, if there ever was one, clad in black as was the fashion then—slender—erect—the subtle lines of his face fixed in meditation. I thought him wonderfully handsome, the mouth being the only weak point. I was too shy to seek an introduction to the poet, but John R. Thompson procured for me Poe's autograph, a possession, of which I was naturally very proud.

While Poe was in Richmond some of his friends got up a reading for his benefit, and I heard him read the "Raven" and some other poems before a small audience in one of the parlors of the Exchange Hotel. In

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*New Glimpses of Poe*

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spite of my admiration of Poe I was not an uncritical listener, and I have retained the impression that he did not read very well. His voice was pleasant enough, but he emphasized the rhythm unduly—a failing common, I believe, to poets endowed with a keen sense of the music of their own verse.

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## *New Glimpses of Poe*

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¶ This picturesque glimpse of the poet may well be supplemented by another from the pen of Bishop O. P. Fitzgerald who, in a talk to the Poe Memorial Association of the University in December, 1898, threw his recollections of Poe for the writer into the following impressive form:

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#### IV—CONCLUSION — EDGAR ALLAN POE: A TALK

A COMPACT, well-set man about five feet six inches high, straight as an arrow, easy-gaited, with white linen coat and trousers, black velvet vest and broad Panama hat, features sad, yet finely cut, shapely head, and eyes that were strangely magnetic as you looked into them—this is the image of Edgar Allan Poe most vivid to my mind as I saw him one warm day in Richmond in 1849. There was a fascination about him that everybody felt. Meeting him in the midst of thousands a stranger would stop to get a second look, and to ask, “Who is he?” He was *distingué* in a peculiar sense—a man bearing the stamp of genius and the charm of

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*New Glimpses of Poe*

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a melancholy that drew one toward him with a strange sympathy. He was scarcely less unique in his personality than in his literary quality. His writings had already given him national reputation. The gentleness of his manner and the tones of his voice seemed to me to be strangely contrasted with the bitterness that characterized his personal controversies. These controversies were strangely numerous, and in nearly all cases their intensity was in the inverse ratio to the importance of the issues involved. Poe, I suspect, was one of the men who said worse things than he felt, his talent for satire proving a snare to him, as it has been to many others who with pen or tongue sacrifice moderation for brilliancy or piquancy of expression. He was harshly treated by some of his contemporaries, but he owed them nothing on this account, giving them as good as they sent in the way of invective or sarcasm. The bitter personalities of literary men at that time were owing in part to an evil fashion then prevalent. The dueling and street fights among politicians had



KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, That we *Edgar A*

*Poe and Thomas W. Cleland* \_\_\_\_\_

are held and firmly bound unto *Hyndham Robertson* <sup>and acting as governor</sup> Lieutenant Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, in the just and full sum of ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY DOLLARS, to the payment whereof, well and truly to be made to the said Governor, or his successors, for the use of the said Commonwealth, we bind ourselves and each of us, our and each of our heirs, executors and administrators, jointly and severally, firmly by these presents Sealed with our seals, and dated this *16<sup>th</sup>* day of *May* 1836.

THE CONDITION OF THE ABOVE OBLIGATION IS SUCH, That whereas a marriage is shortly intended to be had and solemnized between the above bound *Edgar A Poe* \_\_\_\_\_ and *Virginia E. Clemm* \_\_\_\_\_ of the City of Richmond. Now if there is no lawful cause to obstruct said marriage, then the above obligation to be void, else to remain in full force and virtue.

Signed, sealed and delivered }  
in the presence of }

*Chs Howard*

*Edgar A Poe*

SEAL.

*Thos. W. Cleland*

SEAL.

CITY OF RICHMOND, To wit:

This day *Thomas W. Cleland* \_\_\_\_\_ above named, made oath before me, as *Deputy* Clerk of the Court of Hustings for the said City, that *Virginia E. Clemm* \_\_\_\_\_ is of the full age of twenty-one years, and a resident of the said City. Given under my hand, this *16* day of *May* 1836

*Chs Howard*



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## *New Glimpses of Poe*

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their counterpart in the shedding of vitriolic ink among the *literati*, great and small. Poe only differed from the rest in that he had a sharper thrust and a surer aim.

The Richmond *Examiner* was just then achieving its first and winning distinction as an able and ultra advocate of State Rights politics. John C. Calhoun was the leader and the young "chivalry" of the South made a following that was heroic, and that did not stop to count the cost. The *Examiner* was their organ in Virginia—and a live organ it was. John M. Daniel, its editor-in-chief wrote political leaders that were logic and rhetoric on fire. Robert W. Hughes discussed in good English economic questions from the standpoint of his time and his section. Arthur E. Petticolas wrote concerning art with much enthusiasm and some show of culture. Patrick Henry Aylette, a kinsman of the great orator of the Revolution, whose Christian name he bore, with a free hand touched up current politics and living politicians. Aylette was a picturesque Virginian of that time—a man

nearly seven feet high who had something of the eloquence of his renowned ancestor, and the easy swing of a man of the people, a man who believed with all his heart in the Revolution of '98 and '99, and uniformly voted the straight Democratic ticket. Mr. Poe now and then contributed a literary article critical and peculiar, unmistakably his own. There were others who wrote for the *Examiner*—among them a youth who felt called upon to expound oracularly certain controverted Constitutional questions that Clay, Calhoun and Webster had failed to settle. He was a young man then, and need not be named now.

Poe and Daniel were often together, and I was not surprised when informed that arrangements had been made by which the former was soon to become the literary editor of the *Examiner*, was talked of in newspaper circles, and much satisfaction expressed by the initiated, who regarded it as a transaction promising good things for Southern journalism and literature. The *Examiner*, the new star in the journalistic

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## *New Glimpses of Poe*

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firmament, was expected to blaze with added lustre and fill all the South with the illumination.

Poe had the sensitive organization of a man of genius, to whom alcoholic stimulation brings madness; for such there is no middle ground between total abstinence and inebriety. By the persuasion of friends he was induced to take a pledge of total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks. There is no reason to doubt his sincerity. His sad face took on a more hopeful expression; with a new hope in his heart he was about to make a new start in life. It was announced that he would soon make a visit to New York to close out his affairs there, preparatory to his entrance upon his new engagement at Richmond. With a view to giving him pecuniary assistance in a delicate way, and an expression of the good will of the Richmond public toward him, Poe was invited to deliver a lecture on some topic to be chosen by himself. The tickets were placed at five dollars each and at that price three hundred persons were packed into the

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*New Glimpses of Poe*

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assembly rooms of the old Exchange Hotel. The lecture prepared for that occasion was on "The Poetic Principle," and it was read by him as it is now presented in his works. He was a charming reader, his manner the opposite of the elocutionary or sensational—quiet, without gesture, with distinctness of utterance, nice shadings of accent, easy gracefulness, and that indefinable element that draws the hearer toward the speaker with increasing good will and pleasure. I am glad that I heard Poe read that lecture; its sentences on the printed page have for me an added charm from the recollection. The net proceeds of the lecture amounted to fifteen hundred dollars. There was a touch of old Virginia in the way this was done. There is some of that old Virginia still left. The Virginia of that day and this will demonstrate their identity in the outcome of the movement to provide here at your university a suitable memorial of her most distinguished alumnus.

With the proceeds of this lecture in hand, Mr. Poe started to New York, but he never

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## *New Glimpses of Poe*

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made the journey. Stopping in Baltimore *en route* he was invited to a birthday party. During the feast the fair hostess asked him to pledge with wine; and he could not refuse. That glass of wine was a spark to a powder magazine. He went on a debauch, and a few days later died in a hospital of *mania a potu*. On its nearer side death is a tragedy whenever, wherever and however it may come. But the tragedy of Poe's death is too deep for words of mine. He was only thirty-nine years old. His best work ought to have been before him. Had he lived and worked with unclouded brain and ardent purpose during the tremendous decades that followed, what might he not have achieved! Who can compute the loss to our literature from his untimely death!

Go on with your work, gentlemen of the University of Virginia, provide a fitting memorial to Edgar Allan Poe, your illustrious son. Young gentlemen of the University, do your part in this good work—and shun the rock on which he was wrecked.

This Trilogy in three Glimpses thus gives

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## *New Glimpses of Poe*

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us three insights into a remarkable nature at three critical periods of its career: the child, the student, the man. The fallen angel began to fall very early, with elements of pity and terror in the tragedy which might have satisfied Aristotle himself.



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## *New Glimpses of Poe*

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¶ Zolnay's bust of Poe was unveiled with brilliant ceremonies in the Public Hall of the University, October 7, 1899. Mr. Hamilton W. Mabie, the guest of the Poe Association, delivered a masterly address on "Poe's Relations to American Literature."

Mr. Mabie's address was afterwards reprinted in *The Atlantic Monthly*.

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¶ The photographic reproductions of the Poe Bust are included in this volume by the courtesy of Mr. George Zolnay—having been made from the model just before casting in bronze and are unique inasmuch as it is impossible to get a similar effect from the bronze.

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¶ The MS. fac simile are produced from the records in the archives of the University of Virginia..

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